

and Georgia will become members of the alliance.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I further ask the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 523) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 523

Whereas, prior to the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, the Government of Georgia and the Government of Ukraine each expressed the desire to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), have committed their countries to programs of reforms consistent with membership in the Euro-Atlantic community, and have worked consistently for membership in NATO; and

Whereas, in April 2008 at the Bucharest Summit, the assembled leaders of NATO issued the following statement: "NATO welcomes Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO. Both nations have made valuable contributions to Alliance operations. We welcome the democratic reforms in Ukraine and Georgia and look forward to free and fair parliamentary elections in Georgia in May. MAP is the next step for Ukraine and Georgia on their direct way to membership. Today we make clear that we support these countries' applications for MAP. Therefore we will now begin a period of intensive engagement with both at a high political level to address the questions still outstanding pertaining to their MAP applications. We have asked Foreign Ministers to make a first assessment of progress at their December 2008 meeting. Foreign Ministers have the authority to decide on the MAP applications of Ukraine and Georgia." Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports the declaration of the Bucharest Summit, which stated that Ukraine and Georgia will become members of NATO;

(2) reiterates its support for the commitment to further enlargement of NATO to include democratic governments that are able and willing to meet the responsibilities of membership; and

(3) urges the foreign ministers of NATO member states at their meeting in December 2008 to consider favorably the applications of the governments of Ukraine and Georgia for Membership Action Plans.

#### HONORING SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS DURING NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Small Business Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 524, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 524) honoring the entrepreneurial spirit of the owners of small business concerns in the United States during National Small Business Week, beginning April 21, 2008.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 524) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 524

Whereas the 26,800,000 small business concerns in the United States are the driving force behind the Nation's economy, creating more than ¾ of all net new jobs and generating more than 50 percent of the Nation's nonfarm gross domestic product;

Whereas small business concerns represent 99.7 percent of all businesses and employ 50 percent of the Nation's workforce;

Whereas small business concerns represent 97 percent of all exporters and produce 28.6 percent of exported goods;

Whereas small business concerns are the Nation's innovators, advancing technology and productivity;

Whereas the resilience, vitality, and growth of small business concerns are critical to the Nation's competitiveness during a time of economic downturn;

Whereas Congress established the Small Business Administration in 1953, to aid, counsel, assist, and protect the interests of small business concerns in order to preserve free competitive enterprise, to ensure that a fair proportion of the total purchases and contracts or subcontracts for property and services for the Federal Government be placed with small business concerns, to ensure that a fair proportion of the total sales of Government property be made to such small business concerns, and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of the Nation;

Whereas for over 50 years, the Small Business Administration has provided aid and assistance to millions of entrepreneurs who have succeeded in achieving the American dream of owning a small business concern, and thus has played a key role in fostering economic growth; and

Whereas the President has designated the week beginning April 21, 2008, as National Small Business Week; Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) honors the entrepreneurial spirit of the owners of small business concerns in the United States during National Small Business Week, beginning April 21, 2008;

(2) honors the efforts and achievements of the owners and employees of small business concerns, whose hard work, commitment to excellence, and willingness to take a risk, have made them a crucial part of the Nation's economy;

(3) recognizes that small business concerns are essential to restoring the Nation's economic health;

(4) recognizes the vital role of the programs of the Small Business Administration and the work of its employees and its resource partners in providing assistance to entrepreneurs and the owners of small business concerns;

(5) strongly urges the President to take steps to ensure that—

(A) reasonable rules relating to the procurement program for women-owned small business concerns under section 8(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(m)) are expeditiously implemented to give women business owners a fair opportunity to compete for Federal contracts;

(B) small business concerns have access to quality affordable health insurance;

(C) the needs of veterans and reservists who own their own businesses, who work for small business concerns, or want to start their own businesses, are met during deployment and upon their return from duty;

(D) proper measures are enacted to provide a stimulus for business lending during this economic downturn;

(E) the tax burdens of small business concerns are reduced, and that there is a reduction in regulatory and bureaucratic barriers;

(F) small minority owned businesses are supported in their efforts to access the Federal marketplace and gain access to capital;

(G) small business concerns have the tools to become more energy efficient to survive rising costs of energy, increase profits, and reduce the Nation's reliance on foreign oil;

(H) all Federal agencies adhere to the contracting goals for small business concerns, including the goals for small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans, small business concerns owned and controlled by women, small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, and HUBZone small business concerns;

(I) venture capital and small business loans, including microloans and guaranteed loans that are delivered through private lenders, for start-up firms and growing small business concerns are available to all qualified small business concerns; and

(J) the management assistance programs delivered by resource partners on behalf of the Small Business Administration, such as small business development centers, women's business centers, and the Service Corps of Retired Executives, are provided with the Federal resources necessary to do their jobs; and

(6) urges that the Administrator of the Small Business Administration have an active role as a member of the President's Cabinet.

#### RECOGNIZING THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF SEEDS OF PEACE

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 536 which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 536) recognizing the 15th anniversary of the founding of Seeds of Peace, an organization promoting understanding, reconciliation, acceptance, coexistence, and peace in the Middle East, South Asia, and other regions of conflict.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.